Prohibition on Felling of Trees

935. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is total prohibition on felling of forests and non-forest trees; if so, under what provisions of law and under what circumstances;

(b) whether there are any circumstances under which a state Government can give permission to fell forest trees; if so, the details of the circumstances; and

(c) whether total prohibition on felling of forest trees hamper economic development of far flung tribal areas and the people; if so, whether Government would consider alternative policy for such areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) As per section 2(iv) of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 no forestland or portion thereof may be cleared of trees which have grown naturally in that land for the purpose of using it for reafforestation without prior approval of Central Government. Honourable Supreme Court vide order dated 12-12-1996 reiterated the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and directed that felling in all forests is to remain suspended except in accordance with the working plan of the State Government approved by the Government of India.

(c) Since there is no general ban on felling of trees on scientific basis in the country, question does not arise.